REBORN AS A

SPACE MERCENARY

I WOKE UP PILOTING THE STRONGEST STARSHIP!

MANGA

1

ART:
Shunichi Matsui

STORY:
Ryuto

CHARACTER DESIGN:
Tetsuhiro Nabeshima

NNGH...

LEAN

RUB
RUB

HERE?

WHY'S IT SO DANG COLD IN...

SHIVER

SO COLD?!

REBORN AS A

SPACE MERCENARY

I WOKE UP PILOTING THE STRONGEST STARSHIP!

AND WHERE...

IS *HERE?*

ART:
Shunichi Matsui

STORY:
Ryuto

CHARACTER DESIGN:
Tetsuhiro Nabeshima

Volume 1: It's not a Dream. It's Reality.

HMM.

THAT ASIDE...

FEELS PRETTY REALISTIC FOR A DREAM, THOUGH.

AM I DREAMING ...?

WHERE THE HECK AM I?

LET'S SEE, WHAT'D I DO YESTER-DAY?

ATE MY DINNER...

LIKE ALWAYS, I CAME HOME FROM WORK...

PLAYED A GAME...

TOOK A BATH...

OH.

Hmmmmm...

AND THEN I'M PRETTY SURE I WENT TO SLEEP, LIKE USUAL...

THE GAME.

THIS MUST BE... *KRISHNA'S* COCKPIT.

OR BUY A CARGO SHIP AND BECOME A MERCHANT.

STELLA ONLINE

STELLA ONLINE (SOL) *IS A SCI-FI, OPEN-WORLD ONLINE GAME.*

PRETTY MUCH ANYTHING YOU CAN IMAGINE, YOU CAN EXPERIENCE. IT'S A SPECIAL GAME.

YOU CAN GO ON ADVENTURES THROUGHOUT THE GALAXY...

THERE WAS PLENTY OF WORK FOR ME AS MERCENARY AND PILOT, AND I SAVED MY MONEY.

I FINALLY MANAGED TO GET MY FAVORITE SHIP...

I WAS ONE OF THOSE PLAYERS WHO'D GRIND FOR HOURS TO GET MY LOOT.

AS IT HAPPENS, I PICKED THE MOST COMMON ROLE: MERCENARY.

THIS ONE, RIGHT HERE.

ASX-08 KRISHNA.

UHH, FIRST, BOOT UP THE GENERATORS.

Same interface as the game's, eh?

IT'S STILL SUPER COLD IN HERE...

SHIVER

THEN BRING LIFE SUPPORT ONLINE.

SWEET.

LIFE SUPPORT SYSTEM

12 °C
ROOM TEMPERATURE
>20 °C

Oxyen : 20.12%
Nitrogen : 78.01%
Argon : 0.93%
Carbon dioxide : 0.03%

Tekiouna Eigodesukedo Yonnderuhito inaiyone iri Hitosedaimae no highendi gunyouki noryokonaegasi daga genkeiwo to domenai .

JEEZ... IF I HADN'T JUST WOKEN UP, I WOULD HAVE SUFFOCATED.

NO MORE IMMEDIATE THREATS TO MY EXISTENCE.

WHAT EXACTLY IS GOING ON HERE?

SO.

...

THEN AGAIN, IT DOESN'T FEEL LIKE I'LL BE WAKING UP ANY TIME SOON.

AND I WOULDN'T EXPECT TO NOTICE TEMPERATURE CHANGES IN A DREAM...

GUESS I COULD BE DREAMING. I'VE PLAYED A TON OF SOL, AFTER ALL.

MAYBE THIS IS ONE OF THOSE LUCID DREAMS?

...

Hrrrrrrrrm...

SMILE

WHAT-EVER.

GOTTA KEEP IT POSITIVE!

YOU CAN CALL ME CAPTAIN POSITIVE!

WON'T LET IT GET ME DOWN.

HUH...

PILOTING IS WAY EASIER THAN I EXPECTED.

BUT ONCE YOU GET A FEEL FOR THEM, MOVEMENT IS A PIECE OF CAKE.

THE CONTROL STICKS AND PEDALS ARE KINDA TOUGH AT FIRST.

HUH?

OKAY, I CAN PILOT THIS THING. NOW TO FIGURE OUT WHERE I AM.

PILOTING IS ACTUALLY MORE INTUITIVE LIKE THIS. I HAVE MORE PRECISE CONTROL THAN WITH A KEYBOARD AND MOUSE.

HMM, I HAVE NO MONEY.

IN THE CARGO HOLD THERE'S SOME FOOD, AND...

WHAT ELSE?

SO THAT STUFF DIDN'T CARRY OVER FROM THE GAME, HUH?

NO DATA

WHERE'S MY MAP?

WOW, LOTS OF 'EM TOO.

DAMN...

Rare Metals

Dysprosium 2,198,250

Praseodymium 3,151,125

Promethium 2,536,478

Europium 1,569,471

OH, RARE METALS?

YOU CAN EASILY TRADE THEM FOR ENER AT ANY COLONY OR SPACE STATION.

Kinda like gold and jewels.

IN SOL, RARE METALS ARE ALWAYS IN SHORT SUPPLY, AND ARE ESSENTIAL COMMODITIES THROUGHOUT THE GALAXY.

ON THE ONE HAND, IT'S WAY MORE CONVENIENT THAN PAPER BILLS AND COINS, BUT ON THE OTHER, ALL TRANSACTIONS ARE PERMANENTLY LOGGED.

"ENER" IS SOL'S DIGITAL CURRENCY.

IF I WERE IN-GAME, RIGHT ABOUT NOW...

THAT MEANS THAT THE KIND OF PEOPLE WHO WANT TO AVOID BEING LOGGED...

ARE ALWAYS GUNNING FOR RARE METALS.

BREEEEEE

BREEEEEE

敵襲警報

-WARNING-

BZZRRT ...

Hey there, buddy.

SIGH...

BREEE

Warning!

A scan from an unknown vessel has been detected!

BREEE

BREEE

AND THERE IT IS...

Takin' a quick nap?

ZZRZZT...

BZZT...

Whaddya doin' all the way out here?

THEY MUST'VE SPOTTED ME AFTER I BOOTED UP THE GENERATOR.

HEH. NOT REALLY.

DON'T MIND ME.

ZWYU

SWOOSH

I'M GONNA HAVE TO PASS.

I'LL GIVE YOU A FAIR PRICE IF YOU WANNA BUY FROM ME, THOUGH.

Unidentified vessels coming in at lightspeed!

C'mon now, don't be like that!

Just give us some of yer cargo, and we'll be on our way!

FWOOSH

Unknown:001

DATA :

TYPICAL SPACE PIRATE SHIPS.

THEY'VE GOT A FAIR AMOUNT OF CARGO, ARE DECENTLY ARMED, AND THEIR SHIPS AREN'T IN THE BEST CONDITION.

We'll letcha live, I promise.

I'll give ya one more chance to hand over that cargo, nice 'n easy.

You leave me no choice.

DON'T HATE THE PLAYER.

THUNK

VVVV

WWOOMPH!

CHOOOF

CHOOOF

STRAIN

WHOA?!

?!

?!

VVVVVVVVOOO

FWISHT

PUNCH

FWOOM

WHAT THE--?!

HOW'S HE SO FAST?!

GA-CHUNK

TYOOM

TYOOM

TYOOM

TYOOM

TYOOM

WHUMPH

BOOM!!!

AND THAT WAS JUST A SINGLE VOLLEY...?

No!!

His shots went right through the shield!

HIS SHIP CHANGED SHAPE...?

Noooo!

I don't wanna die!!

VWOOO

BAM

BAM

BAM

TYOOM

BOOOOM!

WHOOMPH

POP

POP

YOU LITTLE...

POP

POP

WHOOOSH

...

FWOOMPH

YOU'RE DEAD MEAT!!!!

THU

THU

PYEW

VWOOSH

ZOOM

BSHUUUN

BSHUUN

DAMMIT!!

HE'S SO NIMBLE!!!

TYOOM

FINE! TAKE THIS!!!

TSSKT

CHT

SWOOSH

FWOOMPH

VWOOSH

WHA--?!

DIDN'T DO NOTHIN' ?!

NO! STAY BACK!!

TREMBLE

TREMBLE

DAMN!!

THOOM

THOOM

YOU--!!

WOOOM

BTSUUN

BSHUUN

THOOM

STOP!

STUH...

WHAM!

BOOOOM!

TSINK

HAA!
HAA!
HAA!
HAA!
HAA...
HAA...
HAA...
I'm gonna be sick...
GUESS THERE'S ONLY SO MUCH THE SHIP CAN DAMPEN G-FORCES...
AND AFTER ALL THAT, I'M STILL NOT AWAKE, HUH.
GUHH ?!

SO THIS...

IS REALITY.

HMM.

THE MORE I THINK ABOUT IT...

THIS ISN'T THE WORST SITUATION.

IN SOL, THE KRISHNA IS A STATE-OF-THE-ART SHIP.

SHE'S AN ABSOLUTE BEAST, COMBINING HIGH MOBILITY WITH HEAVY CRUISER-CLASS FIREPOWER.

THE BATTLE CONFIRMED AS MUCH.

WHICH PUTS HER ON A WHOLE 'NOTHER LEVEL COMPARED TO THOSE PIRATE SHIPS.

BY BEING A MERCENARY, LIKE I WAS IN SOL.

Hmmm...

I SHOULD BE ABLE TO MAKE A HALF DECENT LIVING...

WHICH MEANS...

EVEN AFTER REPAIRS, RESUPPLYING FUEL AND AMMO, THERE'S PLENTY LEFT OVER.

If I go off the in-game prices...

Let's see...

THERE WAS A BOUNTY OF NINETEEN THOUSAND ENER ON THOSE PIRATES.

AND THEIR DATA CACHE...

OH?

NOTHING REALLY OF NOTE.

AS FOR THE CARGO RETRIEVED FROM THEIR WRECKAGE...

Retrieval Drones

WOW, IT'S EVEN GOT THE COORDINATES OF THEIR BASE.

THE COORDINATES OF ALL THE STATIONS IN THIS STAR SYSTEM, HUH...

NOW THAT COULD BE WORTH SOME SERIOUS MONEY.

WELL, THAT SOLVES MY LACK-OF-MAP PROBLEM. THANKS, PIRATES!

DATA :

Oxygen

Nitrogen

Carbon dioxide

Nitrogen

BIP

THIS TRADING COLONY.

THE NEAREST PLACE WILL BE...

ANYWAY, IF I WANNA CLAIM THAT BOUNTY AND SELL THIS INFO...

This is the Tarmein Prime Port Authority.

Your docking request has been approved.

OH.

HUH, WAS MY SHIP AND USER DATA DELETED?

Err, my apologies, it appears that your ID data has been corrupted.

Captain...?

Err...

YEAH, I'M GONNA GO WITH MY SOL USERNAME...

AHEM.

MY NAME...? WELL, MY REAL NAME IS SATO TAKAHIRO.

BUT... THAT DOESN'T SEEM TOO FITTING FOR THIS UNIVERSE.

AND I'M...

THIS IS THE STARSHIP *KRISHNA.*

HIRO.

CAPTAIN HIRO.

SO...

HOW DID YOU END UP WITH SUCH A LARGE AMOUNT OF RARE METALS?

.....

Chapter 2

LIKE. I. SAID.

I TOOK OUT SOME SPACE PIRATES AND STOLE THEIR CARGO.

YOU'RE NOT IN THE MERCENARY GUILD, NOR DO YOU HAVE ANY PERSONAL ID.

WHY SHOULD I BELIEVE WHAT YOU SAY?

PSSHHT

YOU CAN'T EVEN TELL US WHERE YOU GOT ALL THOSE METALS.

DUDE. CAN WE DROP THE ROUNDABOUT INTERROGATION STUFF ALREADY?

CHAK

PSSHHH

?

NOTHING IN PARTICULAR. I JUST SPOTTED AN UNFAMILIAR SHIP IN THE HANGAR, SO...

WH-WHAT BRINGS YOU TO THE INTER-ROGATION ROOM?!

L-LIEU-TENANT SERENA ?!

Hi there.

Y-YES, MA'AM...

AND HE'S THE OWNER OF SAID SHIP?

I SEE...

QUITE THE HAUL OF RARE METALS, INDEED.

AND YOU PROMISE THAT THESE AREN'T SOME SORT OF BLACK MARKET GOODS?

OF COURSE.

HMM...

I GOT SOME COORDINATES FROM THE PIRATES' DATABSE THAT LOOK LIKE THE LOCATION OF A BASE OR SOMETHING.

SURE IS.

IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE YOU'D LIKE TO TELL US?

BUT THE SECOND I LET 'EM SEARCH MY HOLD...

AFTER GETTING MY BOUNTY, I WAS PLANNING ON TURNING THAT DATA OVER TO YOU GUYS.

.....

THEY DRAGGED ME IN HERE.

THEN I SEE NO ISSUES.

WHA --?!!

DO YOU HAVE ANY PROOF THAT HIS CARGO CONTAINS STOLEN GOODS?

HUH? N-NO, WE DON'T...

AND HE RECEIVES REASONABLE COMPENSATION IN ENER.

...

WE GET RARE METALS AT A REASONABLE PRICE.

I SEE NO DOWNSIDES TO THIS SITUATION.

...

ENER THAT OF COURSE HE CAN SPEND WITHIN THE COLONY.

YOU KNOW, THAT REMINDS ME...

B-BUT THEN!

TH-THAT WOULD MEAN...!

?!

AND DRUMMING UP ISSUES IN HOPES OF A BRIBE.

RECENTLY, I'VE HEARD RUMORS OF AN EMPLOYEE HERE GOING TO THE DOCKED SHIPS...

IF YOU HEAR ANYTHING ABOUT THAT...

YOU *WILL* LET ME KNOW, RIGHT?

AS THE DAUGHTER OF MARQUESS HOLZ...

IT WOULD CONCERN ME.

ASHEN

YES...

YE...

YE...

N-NOW THEN, IF YOU WILL EXCUSE ME!

FWIP

PSHHT

YES, MA'AM!

I WILL GO COMPLETE THE NECESSARY PAPERWORK!

OF COURSE I WILL!

TAP

?

I'M SORRY ABOUT ALL OF THAT.

INDEED...

BESIDES YOUR NAME AND THAT OF YOUR SHIP, ALL THE OTHER DATA IS BLANK. IT'S ALMOST AS IF...

HE CAN BE OVERZEALOUS WHEN IT COMES TO THIS JOB.

OH, NO WORRIES. MY CIRCUM-STANCES WERE DEFINITELY KINDA SUSPICIOUS.

YOU STUMBLED IN...

FROM SOME OTHER UNIVERSE.

=

?

WHAT'S THE MAT-TER?

AH, NO, NOTHING...

THIS GIRL'S PRETTY SHARP.

WELL, Y'SEE...

UMM...

SO, HOW EXACTLY DID YOU END UP IN THIS STAR SYSTEM?

THAT'S MOST LIKELY WHY I CAN'T REMEMBER ANYTHING.

IT SEEMS LIKE I HAD SOME SORT OF ACCIDENT WHILE USING MY HYPERDRIVE.

I SOMEHOW MANAGED TO BEAT THEM AND FINALLY REACHED THIS PLACE.

AS IF THAT WASN'T BAD ENOUGH, I WAS ATTACKED BY PIRATES.

OH MY...

THAT'S A RATHER IMPLAUSIBLE STORY...

Hmm...

LOST YOUR MEMORIES DUE TO A HYPERDRIVE ACCIDENT...

WHAT?!

A SPY?!

JOLT

IT'S UNFORTUNATE, BUT I'M NO LONGER SHOCKED THAT THEY SUSPECTED YOU OF BEING A SPY.

HUH?

INDEED. IN THE HEAD OFFICE, THERE WAS DISCUSSION OF HOW YOU MAY EVEN BE FROM THE BELBELLUM FEDERATION.

HUH? BELBEL-LAWHAT?

THE BELBELLUM FEDERATION.

WITH A WHOLE STACK OF RARE METALS OF UNKNOWN ORIGINS IS JUST GONNA DOCK AT THE FRONT ENTRANCE OF AN ENEMY COLONY?

SO YOU'RE TELLING ME THAT SOME UNIDENTIFIED MERCENARY...

DON'TCHA THINK I'D DO A LITTLE BETTER THAN THAT?

IF I WERE A SPY...

WHAT A COINCI-DENCE.

I MIGHT BE PUSHING MY LUCK.

I HAD THE EXACT SAME THOUGHT.

I'LL BE SURE TO UPDATE THE HEAD OFFICE ON THIS SITUATION.

I SINCERELY APOLOGIZE FOR WASTING SO MUCH OF YOUR TIME.

OH, YOU OUGHT TO SEE A DOCTOR ABOUT YOUR MEMORY ISSUES.

I CAN INTRODUCE YOU TO A TRUSTWORTHY INDIVIDUAL.

I'D APPRECIATE THAT.

NOW, IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME...

SHE DOESN'T SEEM LIKE A BAD PERSON...

OH, YEAH, BY ALL MEANS.

HOPE I DON'T RUN INTO HER AGAIN.

Real pretty, though.

BUT SHE'S STILL KINDA SCARY.

MR. HIRO.

I'M SURE I'LL SEE YOU AROUND.

PSSHT

PSSHT

WAIT, WHAT?

7
6
5
4
LET'S SEE HERE...
I GOT 2,500,000 ENER FOR THE RARE METALS.
PLUS 10,094 FOR THE BOUNTY ON THE PIRATES.
AND 150,000 FOR THE INTEL ON THEIR BASE.
BIP
BIP
IF ONE ENER IS ABOUT ONE HUNDRED YEN...
AND THE COST OF LIVING HERE IS...
MUMBLE
MUMBLE
IN TOTAL, THAT'S 2,660,094 ENER...

Damn...

FORTY YEARS WORTH OF SAVINGS.

NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT...

.....

GRINDING THROUGH UNCHANGING DAYS AS A NETWORK ADMINISTRATOR FOR MY COMPANY.

YESTERDAY, I WAS A TWENTY-SEVEN-YEAR-OLD BACHELOR...

AND I PUT IN SO MUCH TIME, I ALWAYS MADE IT TO THE HIGHEST LEVELS.

MY ONLY JOY IN LIFE WAS GAMING.

NOTHING AND NOBODY TO HOLD ME BACK, JUST IMMERSING MYSELF IN WORLDS WHERE I COULD RISE TO THE TOP BY MY OWN STRENGTH...

I PLAYED ANYTHING: JAPANESE GAMES, WESTERN GAMES, IT DIDN'T MATTER TO ME.

?

?

BUT I NEVER WOULD'VE EXPECTED THAT THE DAY WOULD COME WHERE I COULD LIVE INSIDE ONE OF THOSE GAMES.

LIFT

THANK GOD I PLAYED *STELLA ONLINE!*

...

aaaaahh

SO WHAT'S NEXT?

nom

HMM...

SO I SPENT THE PAST FEW DAYS DOING MY RESEARCH.

I MIGHT BE SET FOR LIFE, MONEY-WISE...

BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN I'M GONNA SIT AROUND DOING NOTHING.

Primary star: Tarmein

Tarmein I
Due to its close proximity to Tarmein, it experiences extremely high surface temperatures and has little value.

LOOKS LIKE I'M CURRENTLY IN SOME PLACE CALLED THE "TARMEIN SYSTEM"...

Tarmein II
A gas planet made up of energy resources such as deuterium and helium-3.

Asteroid Belt
Thanks to the discovery of ever-scarce rare metals, a bountiful variety of mineral resources are being mined here.

Tarmein III
A planet with a toxic atmosphere and acid rain, but also many useful natural resources.

WHICH IS MADE UP OF A STAR-- TARMEIN-- FOUR PLANETS, AND AN ASTEROID BELT.

Tarmein IV
Another gas planet with similar resources to Tarmein II, but due to its distance from any trading colony it has been left unmolested.

BUT THE SYSTEM IS A BOUNTY OF EXPLOITABLE RESOURCES

UNFORTUNATELY, NONE OF THE PLANETS ARE COMPATIBLE WITH HUMAN LIFE...

SO THERE'S TONS OF MERCHANT AND MINING SHIPS COMING AND GOING FROM THIS COLONY ON A DAILY BASIS.

AND THERE-FORE...

SHACK

IT'S A PRIME HUNTING GROUND FOR SPACE PIRATES.

AS FOR ME...

NOT ONLY THAT...

THAT MEANS A VIRTUALLY UNENDING SOURCE OF WORK.

Belbellum Federation Territory

THIS SYSTEM IS CURRENTLY UNDER THE CONTROL OF THE MIGHTY GRAKKAN EMPIRE.

BUT THIS WHOLE AREA FEELS RIPE FOR CONFLICT.

Tarmein System

THEY'VE BEEN AT ODDS WITH THEIR NEIGHBORS, THE BELBELLUM FEDERATION, FOR MANY YEARS.

Grakkan Empire Territory

IF I HANG AROUND THIS AREA TOO LONG...

THERE ARE UNENDING SKIRMISHES ON THE BORDER BETWEEN THE TWO NATIONS.

I'M DEFINITELY GONNA WIND UP GETTING CAUGHT IN SOME KINDA DISPUTE.

BUT GOING UP AGAINST A MILITARY ISN'T QUITE THE SAME AS SPACE PIRATES. PRETTY RISKY...

IT MIGHT BE PRIMETIME FOR EARNING SOME COIN AS A MER-CENARY.

THIS UNIVERSE WASN'T QUITE THE SAME AS THAT OF THE GAME.

I WAS ALREADY STARTING TO FEEL IT...

I HAVE TO WONDER HOW FAR MY GAME KNOWLEDGE WILL REALLY TAKE ME...

THERE'S ALSO A BUNCH OF OTHER DIFFERING DETAILS.

AND I CAN'T FIND SIMILARLY NAMED STAR SYSTEMS OR ANYTHING.

STELLA ONLINE LACKED A GRAKKEN EMPIRE AND BELBELLUM FEDERATION.

...

HRRMM...

MAYBE I OUGHTTA JUST HOP ON OVER TO SOME OTHER STAR SYSTEM... THEN AGAIN...

CL

ANG

WELL!

IN ANY CASE...

PSSHHT

MIGHT AS WELL GO STOCK UP ON FOOD.

I'VE GOT PLENTY OF TIME.

WOW...

AIN'T THAT SOME-THING.

BUT SEEING IT IN PERSON IS WAY MORE EXCITING.

Awesome!

I'VE SEEN SIGHTS LIKE THIS IN ANIME AND GAMES PLENTY OF TIMES.

...

SKT

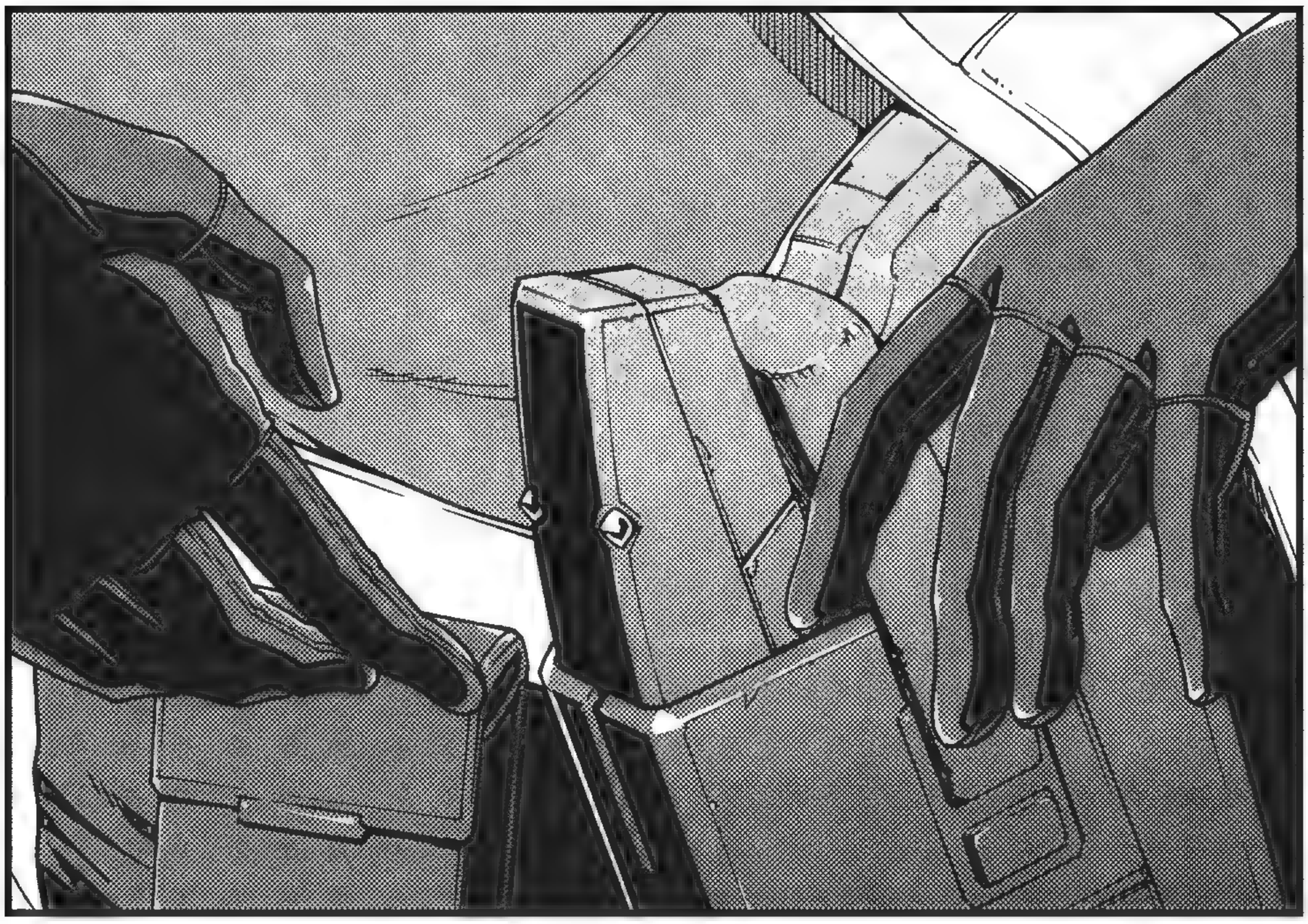
shf

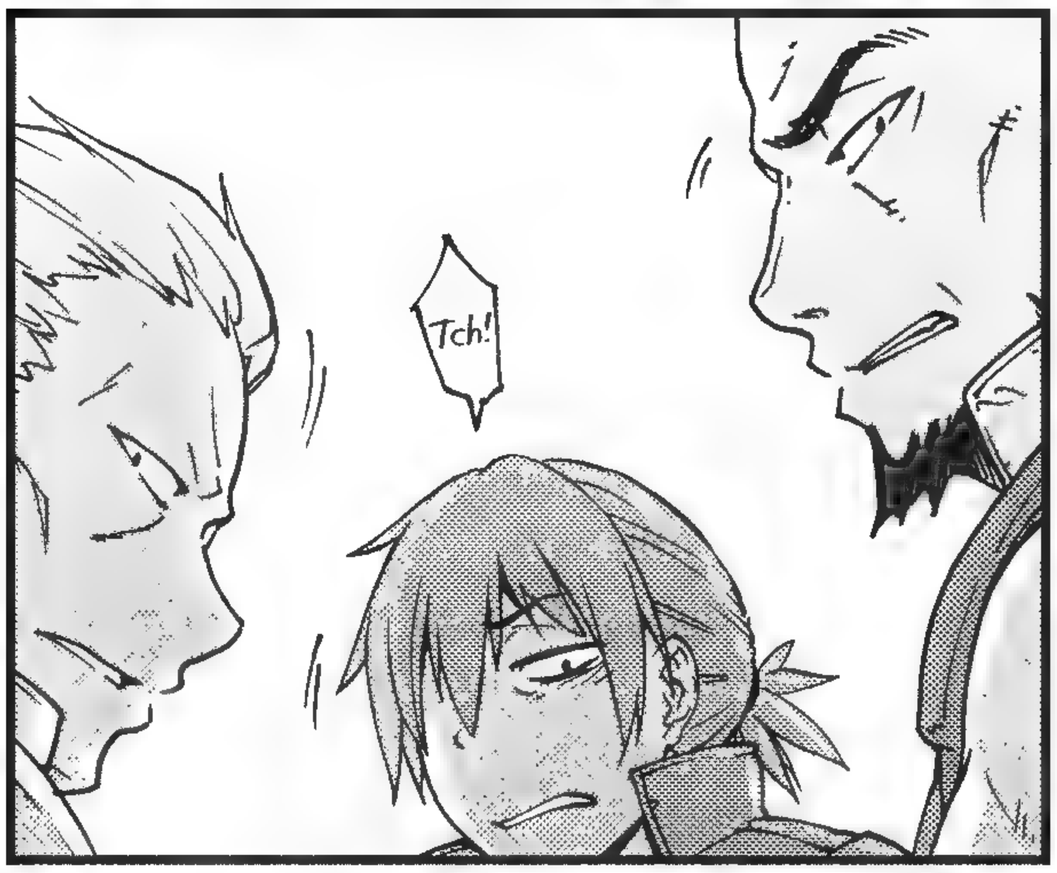
PROBABLY ISN'T THE SAFEST PLACE TO HANG AROUND IN.

RIGHT, THIS DIVISION...

IS BOUND TO GET ME INTO SOME MESSY SITUATIONS.

GAWKING AT THE SITES LIKE A TOURIST...




Tch!

sk
sh

HEY THERE, NEWBIE.

Geez...

Phew...

?

THAT'S A PRETTY NICE GUN YOU GOT THERE.

?

?

HIYA!
♪

AN ELF?

I DON'T REMEMBER ANY FANTASY ELEMENTS IN SOL.

?

AH, MAYBE SHE'S SUPPOSED TO BE SOME SORT OF ALIEN.

NO NEED TO WORRY!

I'M A MERCENARY, JUST LIKE YOU.

You just popped outta nowhere...

WHAT'RE YOU STARING AT, HUH?

IS IT REALLY SO SHOCKING THAT I'M BEING CAUTIOUS?

.....

JUST LOOKING AT YOUR FLAT CHEST, THINKING HOW IT DOESN'T MATCH YOUR ATTITUDE. GOT A PROBLEM WITH THAT?

'SCUSE YOU?

COVER

WHERE DO YOU THINK YOU'RE LOOKING?!

WHA--?!

I'M BORED, SO COME HANG OUT WITH ME.

SERI-OUSLY?

A PROB-LEM?!

YEAH, I GOT A PROBLEM, YOU DAMN NEWBIE!

UH-HUH. SO WHADDYA WANT FROM A "DAMN NEWBIE"?

GOSH... ANYWAY.

I GOT A TASK FOR YOU.

Ahem!

I'VE GOT SOME TIME TO KILL SHOWING SOME BUMPKIN AROUND TOWN.

This colony is so boring...

I CAME HERE CUZ IT SEEMED LIKE A BATTLE WAS JUST WAITING TO HAPPEN.

BUT THERE'S BEEN NO CALL FOR MERCENARIES YET.

TAGGING ALONG WITH A POOR LITTLE SPACE ELF MIGHT BE A GOOD CHANCE TO LEARN ABOUT EVERYDAY LIFE AROUND HERE.

THAT SAID...

SHE COULDN'T MAKE ME MORE SUSPICIOUS IF SHE TRIED.

YOU?

HIRO.

OH, ALMOST FORGOT INTRO-DUCTIONS.

I'M ELMA.

STILL PRETTIER THAN "HIRO"!

AND "ELMA" IS OH SO COMPLICATED?

THAT'S IT? AWFULLY SIMPLE, HUH.

GLAD WE COULD CLEAR THAT UP!

WHAT-EVER YOU SAY...

FOLLOW ME, NEWBIE!

OKAY!

LET'S GET THE TOUR UNDERWAY!

SURE THING.

WHAAAT?!

GAWK

YOU'RE NOT EVEN REGIS-TERED?!!

UHM...

IS NOT REGISTERING WITH THE MERCENARY GUILD THAT BIG A DEAL?

I'M AMAZED YOU'RE EVEN STILL ALIVE!

CLENCH

IT'S TRULY A HEART-WRENCHING TALE OF BRAVERY.

NO DUH, OF COURSE IT IS!!

AN UNREGI-STERED GUNSHIP MIGHT AS WELL BE A PIRATE SHIP!!

WE'RE GOING TO THE GUILD! RIGHT NOW!!

DRAG

DRAG

Chapter 3

WOW...

I GUESS. IT'S SIMILAR.

LOOKS KINDA LIKE A CITY HALL.

I MIGHT NOT LOOK IT, BUT I'M FIFTY-THREE.

MUST'VE GOTTEN STARTED PRETTY YOUNG, THEN.

FIVE YEARS. I'M BASICALLY A VETERAN.

YOU SEEM TO KNOW YOUR WAY 'ROUND. BEEN A MERCENARY FOR A WHILE?

...

TWITCH

WOW...

SO WHATCHA GET UP TO THE FIRST FORTY-EIGHT YEARS?

TRYING TO LOOK YOUNGER?

NUH...

NONE...

.....?

NOT REALLY. YOU HUMANS JUST DON'T LIVE VERY LONG. ELVES CAN LIVE FOR OVER FIVE HUNDRED YEARS, AND...

IT DOESN'T MATTER!!

NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS!

ANGRY

SO THAT'S HOW IT IS...

.....

puff

huff

IT'S POOR MANNERS TO DIG INTO A MERCENARY'S PAST!

HEY!

MUST HAVE BEEN A PRETTY EMBARR-ASSING EARLY LIFE.

She's an open book.

HUH?

WHADDYA WANT?

TSK

YER UNREGIS-TERED?

YA BEEN *WHAT?*

GOT A NEWBIE FOR YA.

PAT

TENSE

...

APPARENTLY, HE'S BEEN GOING AROUND AS A MERCE-NARY WITHOUT REGISTERING.

SHUT UP!

AWW, CAT GOT YOUR TONGUE?

BIP

Classic comedy!

HMPH, WHATEVER. JUST SEND ME YER SHIP NAME AND ID.

S-SURE...

BIP

BIP

THE HECK?

HUH?

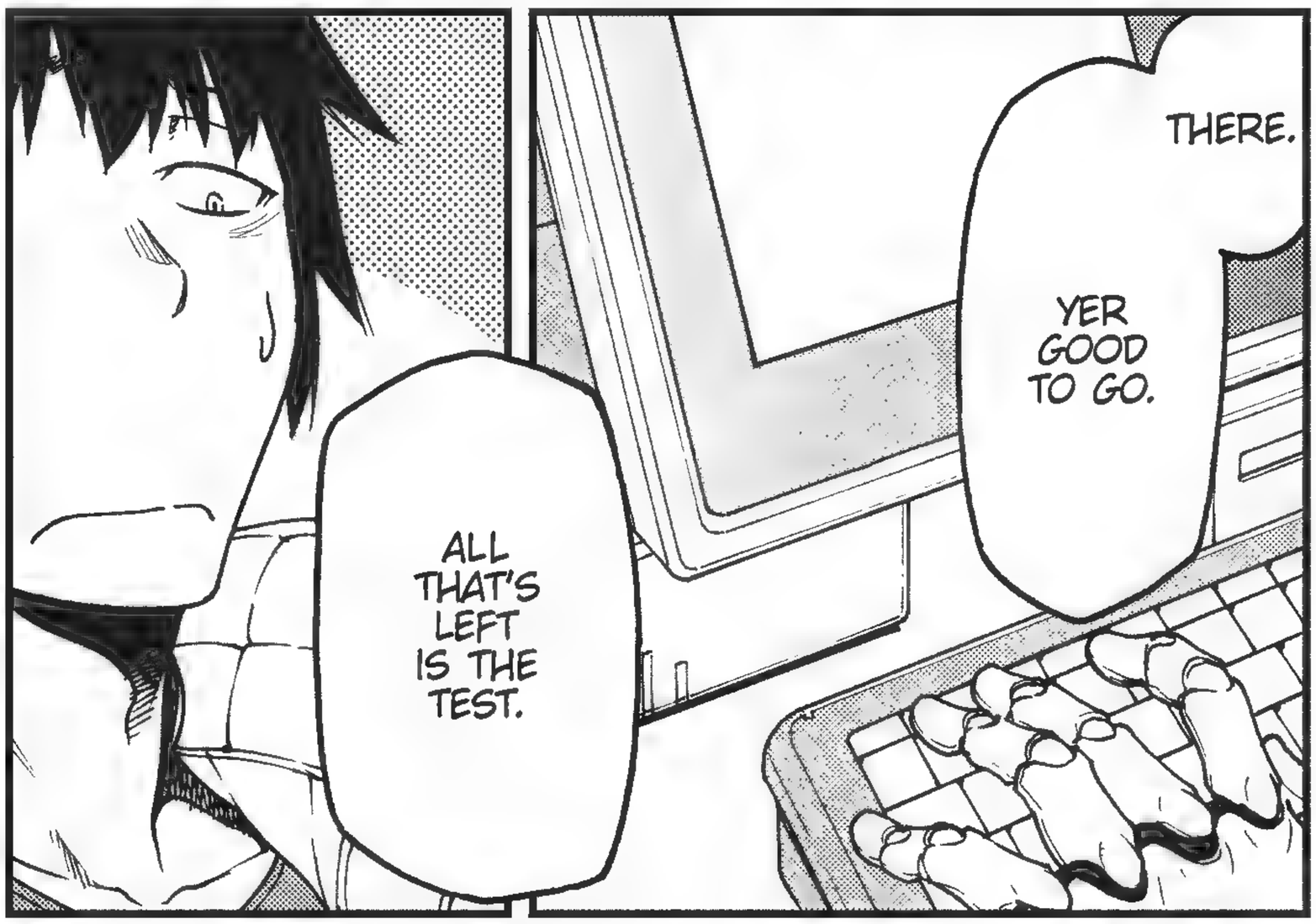
HELL, THERE'S BARELY ANY INFO ON IT.

NO TRADE RECORDS, NO ITINER-ARIES...

AIN'T NEVER SEEN A SHIP LIKE THAT BEFORE.

OH, AND I'M SUFFERING FROM A KIND OF AMNESIA...
Heh heh heh heh...
WELL, Y'SEE, I HAD AN ACCIDENT IN HYPERSPACE, AND THAT CORRUPTED ALL MY DATA.

PHEW, A LUCKY BREAK.
GOOD THING HE DIDN'T PRY ANY FURTHER...
BAD MANNERS TO GET NOSY WITH MERCENARIES ANYWAY.
WHAT-EVER.


ALL THAT'S LEFT IS THE TEST.
YER GOOD TO GO.
THERE.

THESE ARE TRAINING SIMULATORS.

ONE OF 'EM OUGHTTA BE SOMETHIN' LIKE YOUR SHIP.

YA MIGHTA BEEN WORKIN' ALREADY, BUT WE STILL DUNNO WHATCHA REALLY GOT.

SMIRK

SMIRK

WHATCHU LOOKIN' AT?!

CHOOSE ONE.

OKAY.

BY THE WAY...

glance

...

HOW COOL YOU CAN BE, NEWBIE!

I MEAN--

OH, DON'T MIND ME! JUST WANNA SEE HOW AWKWARD--

C'MON, NEWBIE! SHOW US YOUR SKILLS!

YEAH, YEAH...

YA PASSED.
1
2
BUT...
CRACK
CRICK
ALL RIGHT!
GLAD TO HEAR IT.
CLUNK
CLUNK
CLUNK
WELL...
WHAT'S WITH THAT PUZZLED LOOK?

THEN GRADUALLY UPPED THE DIFFICULTY...

I LOADED UP A BEGINNERS' TEST PROGRAM FOR YA.

Sigh...

ALTHOUGH NEAR THE END, THERE MIGHT'VE BEEN SOME MORE CHALLENGING STUFF...

GOTCHA. I DIDN'T REALLY NOTICE IT GETTING MORE DIFFICULT.

BASICALLY, IT REPRESENTS YER COMBAT SKILLS AS A MERCENARY.

PLATINUM

GOLD

SILVER

BRONZE

IRON

WE MER-CENARIES GOT A RANKING SYSTEM.

I SEE.

RIGHT.

THE LAST PART WAS A PROGRAM FOR THOSE TESTING FOR GOLD RANK.

GOLD RANK?

?

YEAH.

NOT UNTIL YOU HAVE A TRACK RECORD, KNOW WHAT I MEAN?

RIGHT.

BUT I CAN'T MOVE YA STRAIGHT UP TO GOLD.

YOU'LL GO UP ONCE YA GOT SOMETHIN' TO SHOW FOR IT.

RANK-BRONZE

DING

SO YOU'RE GONNA START OUT AT BRONZE.

YUP.

I WOULDN'T WANNA JUMP RIGHT TO GOLD ANYWAY.

YA GOT ALL THAT?

AND MISS OUT ON ALL THE FUN OF RANKING UP?

I DON'T THINK SO!

OH, AND...

I'VE BEEN FEELING A GLARE FOR A WHILE NOW...

UH-HUH...

WHAT'S GOT HER SO CRANKY?

SOME-THING I DID?

I'VE BEEN AT SILVER FOR FIVE YEARS NOW!!

SHOUT

I'VE...

?

HUH?

.....

OH!

THIS IS GONNA GET OLD, REAL FAST...

UH OH...

Grrrr...

WONDER IF THERE'S ANY KIND VETERANS AROUND THAT COULD SHOW ME THE BEST SHOPS?

BUT I DON'T KNOW MY WAY AROUND THE COLONY.

THAT REMINDS ME, I WANTED TO TOP UP MY FOOD STORES...

PEEK

THAT SURE WOULD BE NICE.

HI

BEEEEAM

WEEELL, IF YOU INSIST!

A VETERAN'S BRILLIANT ADVICE WOULD BE INVALUABLE!

...

OF COURSE, FOR A PITIFULLY CLUELESS NEWBIE LIKE YOU...

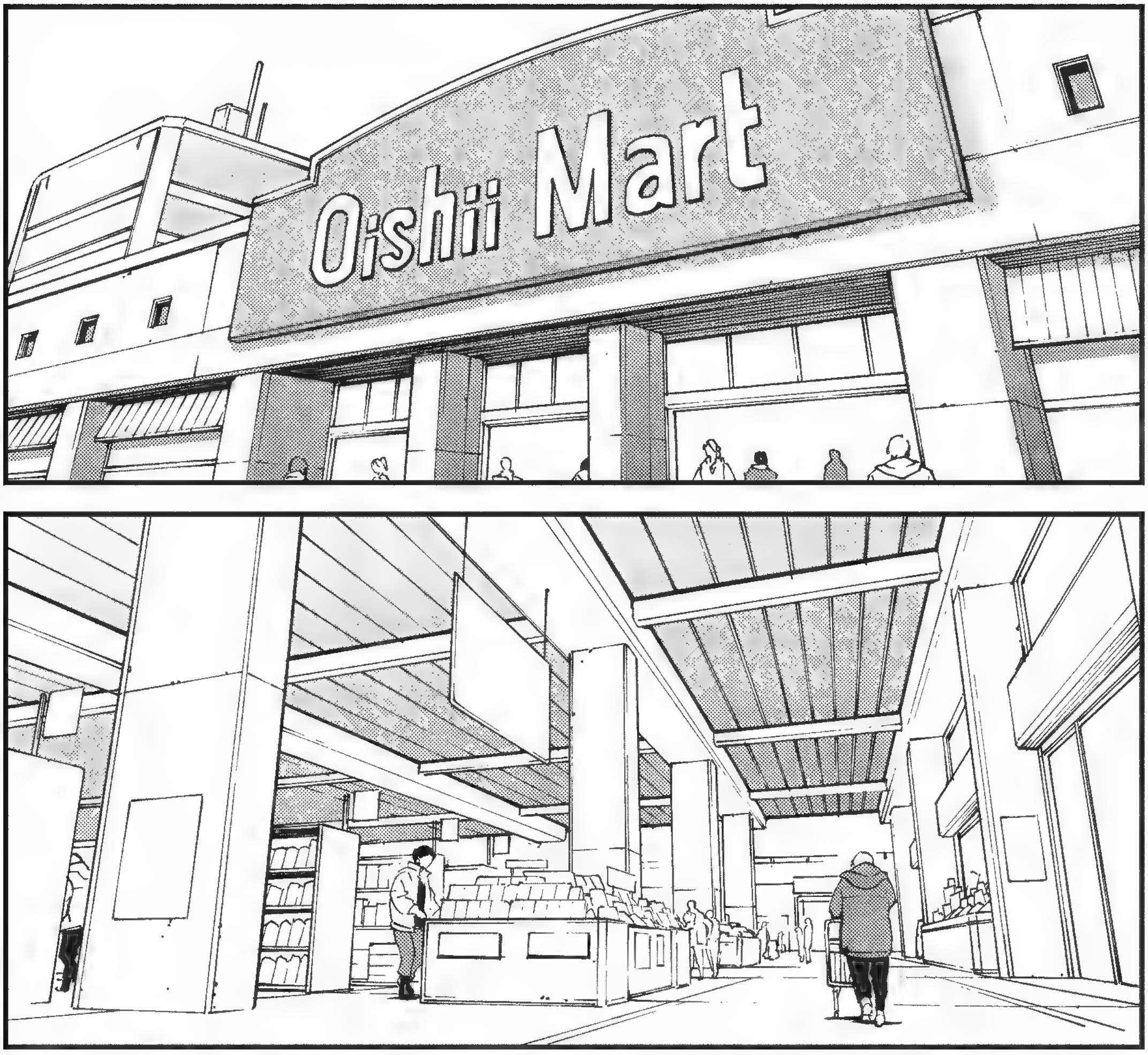
I'LL TAKE YOU TO THE BEST GROCER I KNOW!

JUST FOLLOW ME!

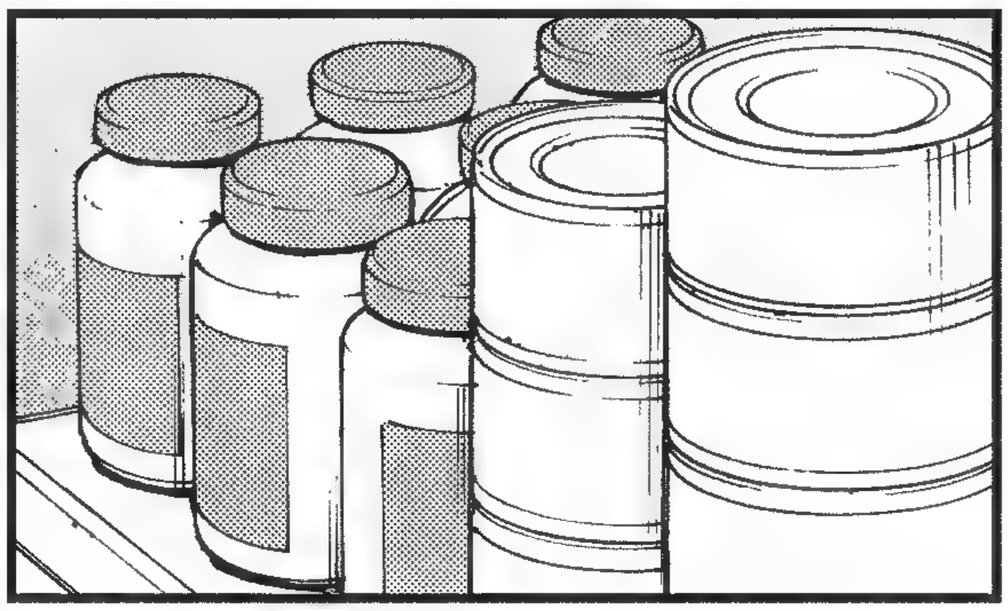
TOO EASY...

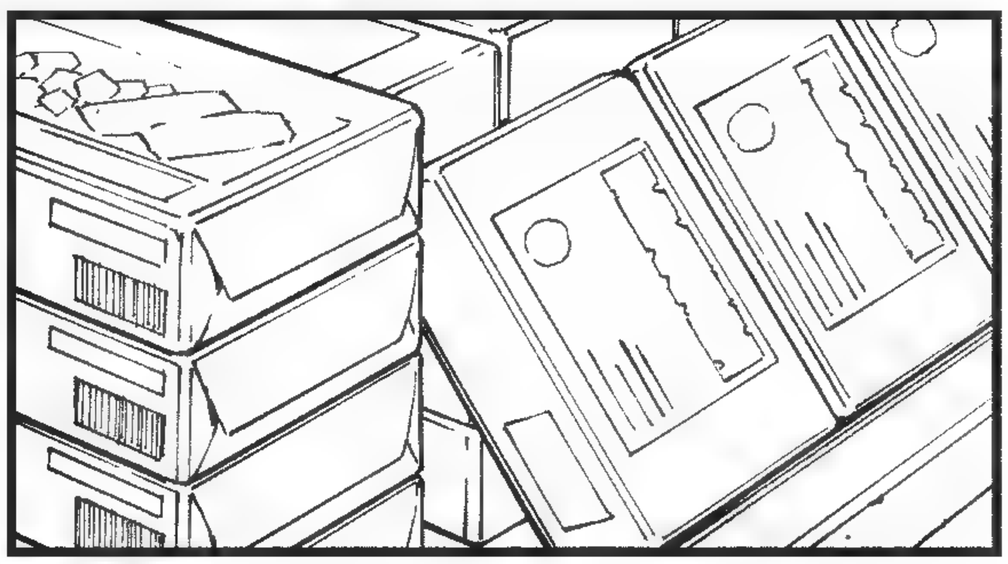
♪

...


Oishii Mart

SO?
WHADDYA WANT?
UHH... WHAT'S GOOD?





SYN-THETIC MEAT...

AND IF THERE'S ROOM IN YOUR BUDGET, HOW 'BOUT SOME SYNTHETIC MEAT OR SOMETHING?

WELL, IF YOU'VE GOT A FOOD PRINTER, ALL YOU NEED IS SOME CARTRIDGES.

THAT STUFF'S FOR THE RICHEST OF THE RICH!

Not gonna find any around here.

WHAT?!

WHERE'S THE REGULAR MEAT 'N VEGGIES?

SAY...

WHERE CAN I FIND SOME SOFT DRINKS?

SO THAT'S HOW IT IS...

Livestock farming must be inefficient on a colony.

HUH?

YOU'RE TELLIN' ME THERE'S JUICE BUT NO SODA?!

?

HUH? LIKE COLA OR SODA. Y'KNOW, DRINKS WITH BUBBLES IN 'EM?

SOFT DRINK...

WHAT'S THAT?

WHA--?!

NEVER HEARD OF IT.

UHH?

WHAT'S YOUR PROB-LEM?

SULLEN

OOOKAY THEN...

?

GOD... IS DEAD.

BUT THERE'S GRAVITY AND PRESSURE HERE.

SOMETHING TO DO WITH ZERO GRAVITY? OR PRESSURE?

NO, WAIT A SEC. WAS IT THAT YOU CAN'T DRINK CARBONATED STUFF IN SPACE?

CARBONATED DRINKS DON'T EXIST IN THIS GALAXY?

NO WAY...

I CAN'T IMAGINE EVEN A SINGLE REASON!!

Seriously, you okay?

Umm...

Gaaaaaaaah!

I... I HAVE NO IDEA!!

MAYBE I CAN FIND SODA PLANETSIDE?

A PLANET...

WAIT...

BIP

GA-THUNK

THERE'S A CHANCE THAT THEY'RE AVAILABLE LIKE NORMAL DOWN THERE.

IF I HEAD TO A RESI-DENTIAL AREA.

STAGGER

HEY... WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU?

You good?

I'VE DECIDED...

I'M GONNA BUY MYSELF A DETACHED HOME WITH A YARD ON ONE OF THE PLANETS!!

CLENCH

.....

.....

ALSO, JUST SO YA KNOW, THAT'LL COST HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS OF ENER.

Between real estate and citizenship...

WHAT DOES THAT HAVE TO DO WITH ANY-THING?

Talk about outta no-where...

Oishii Mart

WHATEVER YA SAY.

GOTTA KEEP LOFTY GOALS FOR YOURSELF...

Only carrying what he'll eat right away.

NOOO!!

TOLD YA I KNEW A GOOD PLACE! BETTER BE THANKFUL.

I AM. THAT'S WHY I GOT YOU A DRINK, NO?

PRETTY HANDY THAT THEY'LL TAKE YOUR GROCERIES STRAIGHT TO THE SHIP FOR YOU.

THEY TREAT THEIR SHIP-BOUND CUSTOMERS WELL HERE.

ST--!

STOP IT!

C'MON, BE A GOOD GIRL NOW...

FWSH

LET'S SEE IF THE REST OF YOU IS AS PRETTY.

THK

WELL NOW, AIN'T YOU A PRETTY THANG...

HOLD IT RIGHT THERE.

GRAB

WH--!

THINK ABOUT IT. AN UNARMED GIRL, IN A PLACE LIKE THIS...

YOU SERIOUSLY TELLIN' ME TO TURN A BLIND EYE?!

SHE'S NOT GONNA SURVIVE MUCH LONGER ON HER OWN.

EVEN IF YOU GO AND SAVE HER NOW...

THIS KINDA THING HAPPENS ALL OVER THE GALAXY.

ARE YOU REALLY GONNA RISK YOUR LIFE EVERY TIME?

YOU'RE JUST A MERCENARY.

NOT A HERO.

.....

CHUK

WAI--!

IS WHAT...

I GUESS YOU'RE RIGHT...

PHEW.

YOU THOUGHT I'D SAY!!

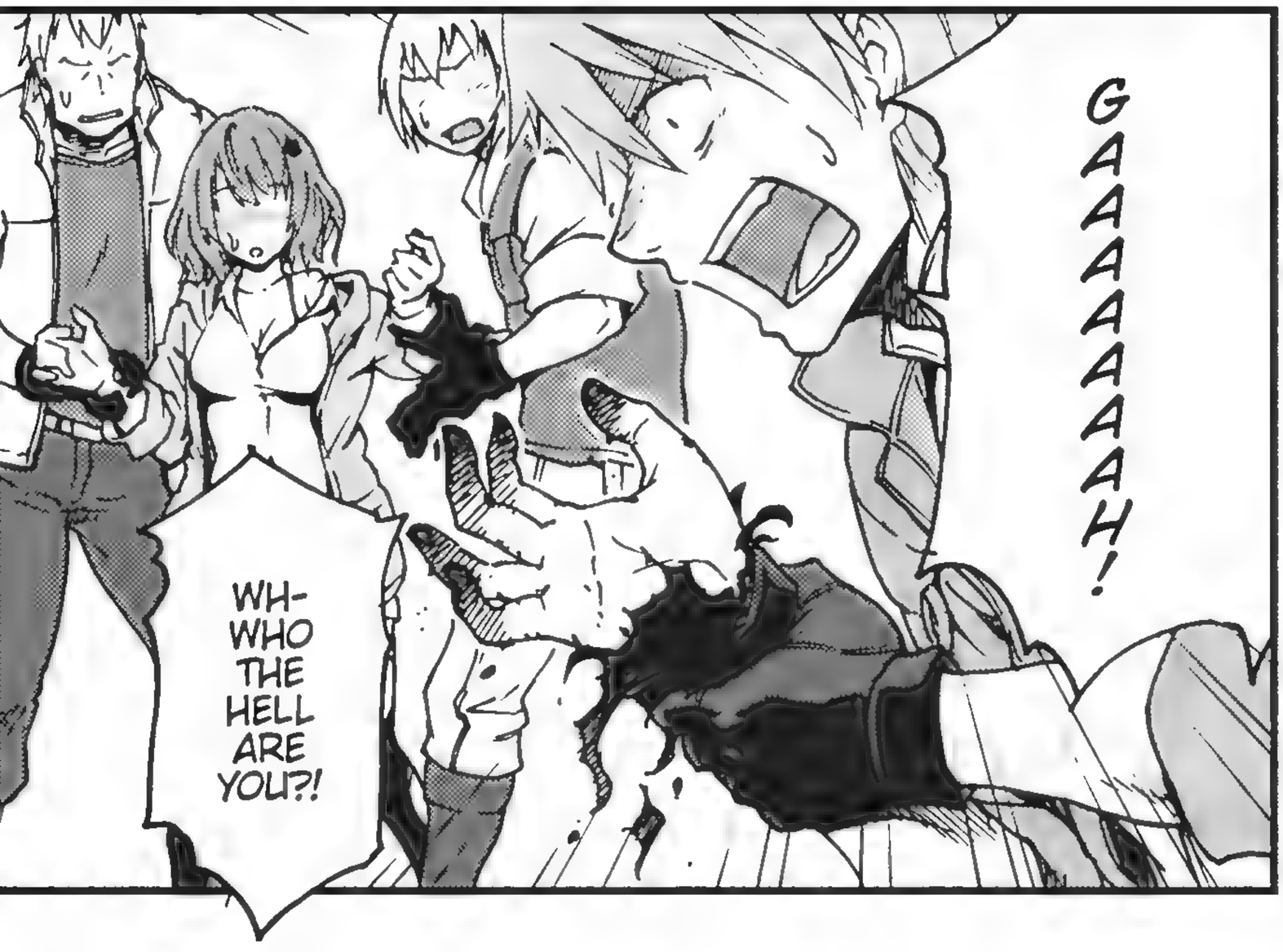
KLWOO

KLWOO

SHIT! GOT US A FEISTY ONE...

GUESS I'LL JUST HAFTA KNOCK YA OUT...

M
O
O
O
O
O
O


GAAAAAAAAAH!
WH-WHO THE HELL ARE YOU?!

HNG--!

HUH.

I ACTUALLY HIT 'IM.

GUESS MY IN-GAME PRACTICE IS GOOD FOR SOMETHING!

YOU ASSHOLE!

KUH!

TCHJ

AGH!

YOU WANNA MESS WITH--

TCHJ

YOU'RE NOT GETTIN' ANOTHER WARNING SHOT!

RUN, AND DON'T STOP!

TCHJ

DA
YOU'LL PAY FOR THIS!
SH
HNG!
UMM...
UHH...
WHAT'RE YOU GONNA DO WITH HER NOW, GENIUS?
WHADDYA MEAN, WHAT AM I GONNA DO?
CHAK
I...
SO.
CHK

.....

WHAT AM I GONNA DO?

Chapter 4

SLURP

SO...

WHATCHA GONNA DO WITH HER?

WHAT *SHOULD* I DO?

YOU KIDDING ME?

UHHH...

SEE YA.

CLATTER

HOW SHOULD I KNOW?

YOU SAVED HER. YOU FIGURE IT OUT.

...

TWITCH

SHE FINALLY SHOWS HER TRUE COLORS.

WELL, THERE YA GO!

?

TWITCH

TWITCH

HERE I THOUGHT SHE WAS A GENEROUS, RELIABLE PERSON...

WHO KNEW THAT WISE VETERAN MERCENARY ELMA WAS SO COLD SHE'D ABANDON HER TRAINEE, HER **APPRENTICE**, LIKE THAT!

OH WELL, GUESS I'LL HAVE TO GO ASK THAT GUY FROM THE GUILD FOR HELP.

I'M ASHAMED THAT I COULDN'T SEE HER FOR WHO SHE REALLY WAS.

GRAB!!

I'M SURE HE'LL BE FAR MORE RELIABLE...

THAN SOME FLAT-CHESTED, TREACHEROUS, COLD-BLOODED, POOR, LITTLE ELF...

IT'LL BE A GREAT WAY TO KILL TIME!

C'MON, YOU CAN DO IT! ♡

AND YOU CAN SHUT IT!

YOU GOT A DEATH WISH?

FLUSTER

FLUSTER

LOOK

SO WHAT'S YOUR NAME?

HM?

OH, I-I'M MIMI...

FLUMP

NO...

I HAVE NO ONE...

UH-HUH. AND IS THERE ANYONE YOU CAN TURN TO ON THIS COLONY FOR HELP?

HUH? I MEAN, IF SHE'S GOT NOWHERE TO GO...

WHAT NOW?

YOU HEARD HER.

.....

GUESS I'LL HAVE TO BRING HER BACK TO MY SHIP FOR NOW.

MIMI, WAS IT?

TH-THAT'S RIGHT...

THIS GUY'S A MERCENARY WITH A SPACESHIP.

YOU GOT ANY USEFUL SKILLS?

UMM...

WHAT KINDS OF THINGS WOULD BE USEFUL?

THAT RESPONSE SAYS IT ALL.

WHICH LEAVES US WITH JUST CHORES, I GUESS.

COOKING, CLEANING, WHAT ELSE...

SPFFFFFT

GIVING HIM A *HAND* AT NIGHT...

AND THAT'S ABOUT IT.

I WASN'T GONNA JUST TAKE HER STRAIGHT TO MY BED!!

THAT'S WHAT YOU MEANT BY BRINGING HER BACK TO YOUR SHIP, RIGHT?

THEN WHAT DID YOU HAVE IN MIND?

WH--!

EWW, GROSS!!

THE HELL ARE YOU SAYING ?!

MUTTER

MUTTER

GO FIND ME A SINGLE PERSON IN THIS COLONY...

THAT'D BE SO STUPIDLY KIND AS TO GO AROUND RESCUING USELESS STRANGERS.

glance

I...

bluuu

uush

YOU WEREN'T BORN IN THE THIRD DIVISION, WERE YOU?

I WON'T DO ANYTHING LIKE THAT!

Don't worry!

NO NO NO, WAIT!

HEY, MIMI...

ANYWAY, WHAT YOU DO IS UP TO YOU.

THIS AIN'T THE KINDA PLACE FOR AN INNOCENT GIRL LIKE HER TO BE WANDERING AROUND.

?

SO WHAT HAPPENED?

YOU SAID YOU HAD NOWHERE TO GO.

.....

I'M FROM THIS COLONY'S SECOND DIVISION.

I LIVED A COMPLETELY NORMAL LIFE WITH MY MOM AND DAD...

BUT...

CLENCH

I...

ONE DAY, THEY BOTH SUDDENLY DIED.

AND APPARENTLY THEY WERE INVOLVED IN A WORKPLACE ACCIDENT.

THEY WERE IN CHARGE OF THE COLONY'S OXYGEN INFRA-STRUCTURE...

AND I WAS SADDLED WITH DAMAGES THAT FAR OVER-SHADOWED ANY INHERITANCE I MIGHT HAVE RECEIVED.

FOR WHATEVER REASON, MY PARENTS WERE BLAMED FOR THE ACCIDENT...

PRETTY SOON, I COULDN'T AFFORD THE SECOND DIVISION'S RESIDENTIAL TAXES, EITHER...

I WAS A STUDENT AT THE TIME, SO OF COURSE, I HAD NO WAY OF PAYING.

...

SO I WAS KICKED OUT INTO THE THIRD DIVISION.

...

WHAT?

YOU FORGET ABOUT THAT, TOO?

HUH?

HOW'S THAT EVEN POSSIBLE?

HAPPENS ALL THE TIME.

IN ANY CASE, THAT MEANS SHE'S GOT NO OTHER OPTIONS.

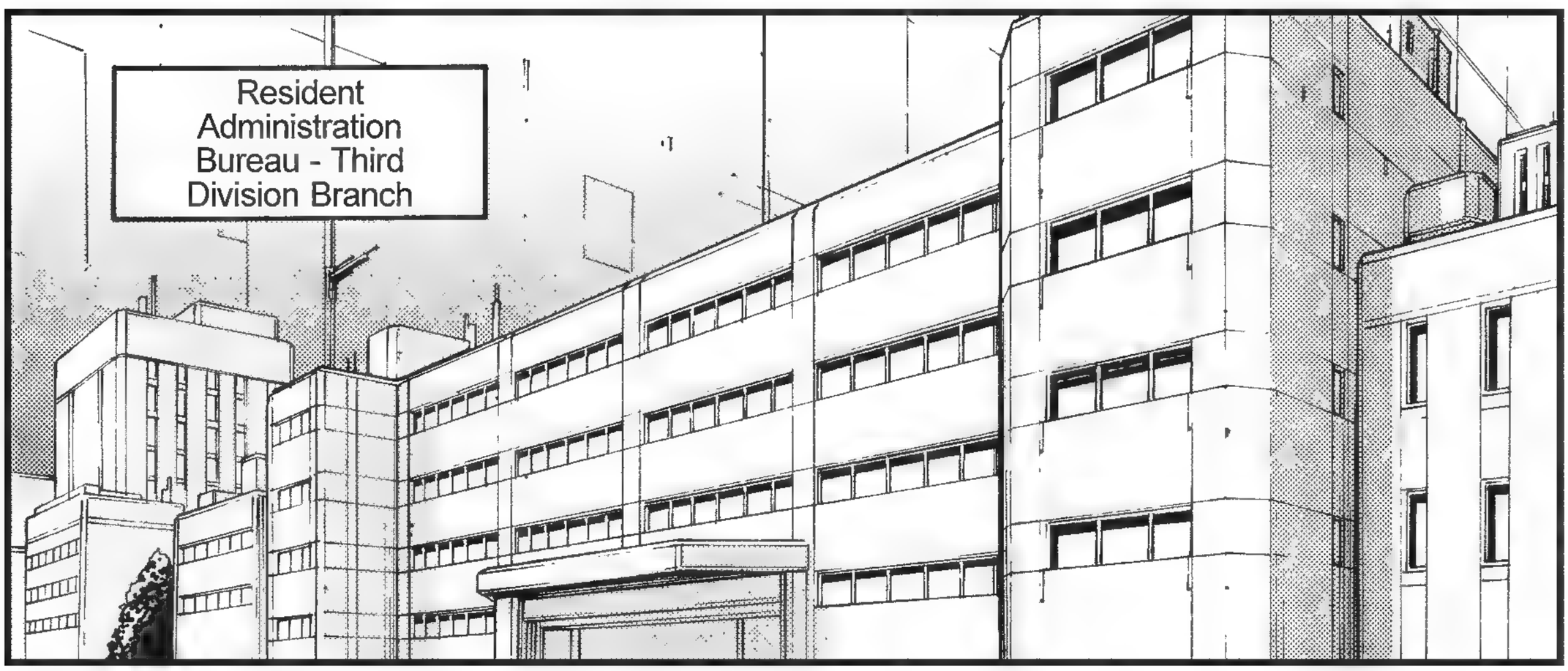
MAYBE YOU LIVED A LIFE OF PRIVILEGE BEFORE LOSING YOUR MEMORY.

...

=

?

SERI-OUSLY?


Resident
Administration
Bureau - Third
Division Branch

PUSH
YES.
JUST TO CONFIRM...

SERIOUSLY?

AND THE TAXES FOR HER RIGHT TO FREE TRAVEL, THE TOTAL IS EXACTLY...

WITH THE HEAD TAX, THE DEFAULTED SECOND DISTRICT RESIDENTIAL TAX PAYMENTS, THE FEES THEREIN FOR LATE PAYMENT, THE UNPAID DAMAGES...

One Ener = one hundred Yen?

FIVE HUNDRED THOU-SAND ENER, SO...

THAT'S AROUND FIFTY MILLION YEN.

FIVE HUNDRED THOUSAND ENER.

THAT IS THE COST OF "HER FREEDOM," AS YOU PUT IT.

CAN'T SHE REJECT HER INHERITANCE OR DECLARE BANK-RUPTCY?

OF COURSE, THOSE ARE BOTH POSSIBILI-TIES.

NOW HOLD ON A SEC.

WHY IS A MINOR BEING FORCED TO TAKE ON HER PARENTS' DEBT, ANYWAY?

THAT SAID, IF SHE WERE TO CONTINUE RESIDING IN THE THIRD DIVISION, SHE WOULD BE EXEMPT FROM ALL OF THOSE CHARGES.

HOWEVER, THE DEADLINE FOR SUCH OPTIONS HAS ALREADY PASSED.

LISTEN...

C'mon now...

ALTHOUGH, IN EXCHANGE, SHE WOULD ALSO BE INELIGIBLE FOR ANY GOVERN-MENT AID PROGRAMS.

SURELY YOU MUST HAVE SOME IDEA OF WHAT'LL HAPPEN...

IF YOU ABANDON A MINOR WITH NO PARENTS IN SOMEWHERE LIKE THE THIRD DIVISION.

...?

HOWEVER, FIVE HUNDRED THOUSAND ENER IS STILL A CONSIDER-ABLE SUM.

LIFT

I HAVE HEARD THAT ONE CAN DO RATHER WELL FOR ONE'S SELF AS A MERCENARY.

YOU WILL FIND THAT IN THE THIRD DIVISION, THERE ARE MANY MANY CHEAPER ALTERNATIVES.

IF YOU WISH TO HAVE A GOOD TIME WITH... A GIRL LIKE HER...

MAY I SUGGEST THAT YOU SATISFY YOUR URGES THAT WAY...

INSTEAD OF TAKING ON BURDENS BEYOND YOUR MEANS?

CLATTER

?

ALL RIGHT...

CHALLENGE ACCEPTED.

WELCOME BACK.

HEY.

SO, HOW'D IT GO?

HUH.

DAAAANE

GUESS THAT ANSWERS THAT.

GASP!

MIMI.

YUP.

I GAVE 'EM A WALLOP WITH MY WALLET.

HUH?

HERE. CLOTHES FOR YOU.

I JUST GRABBED WHATEVER.

NICE. JUST LIKE ANY GOOD MERCENARY.

I IMAGINE THAT YOU'RE GONNA HAVE IT HARD FROM NOW ON, BUT GOOD LUCK, OKAY?

TH-THANK YOU VERY MUCH!

POOFT

MUMBLE MUMBLE

OH, ONE MORE THING...

IF YOU DIE, SHE'LL BE ON HER OWN.

SO NO MORE SUDDEN HEROICS, YEAH?

?

SAME GOES FOR YOU.

BOW

WELP.

I'M HEADING BACK TO MY SHIP.

fssssshhhh

HOW MANY DAYS HAS IT BEEN SINCE I LAST HAD A SHOWER...

I'M SO HAPPY...

fssssshhhh

.....

SQUIK

TREMBLE

TREMBLE

OM.

MMM, THIS SYNTHETIC MEAT STUFF IS PRETTY TASTY.

THE FOOD CARTRIDGE THINGS WEREN'T HALF BAD EITHER.

BUT THERE'S A REASON THIS COSTS MORE, HUH?

WHAT'S UP? DON'T LIKE THE TASTE?

N-NO! IT'S DELI-CIOUS!!

AFTER THIS? LET'S SEE...

UMM... WHAT WERE YOU PLANNING ON DOING? AFTER THIS?

.....

AND THEN GO RIGHT TO SLEEP, I GUESS?

WELL, I WAS GONNA TAKE A SHOWER, THEN FIGURE OUT TOMORROW'S AGENDA.

.....

YOU CAN HEAD TO BED NOW IF YA WANT.

YOU MUST BE PRETTY TIRED AFTER TODAY, RIGHT?

YES...

I THINK I'LL DO THAT...

.....

I'LL NEED TO BUY A BUNCH OF STUFF IF MIMI'S GONNA BE LIVING WITH ME...

SO I'VE BEEN RESEARCH-ING THE THIRD DIVISION.

HUH, I SEE...

BUT THE PLACE I WENT TO WITH ELMA TODAY IS ONE OF THE FEW HONEST BUSINESSES AROUND.

Oishii Mart

APPARENTLY, MOST STORES SELL ALL SORTS OF SHADY STUFF.

KNOCK

KNOCK

DOESN'T CALL HERSELF A VETERAN FOR NOTHING.

I GUESS THE POOR LITTLE ELF...

HUH? MIMI?

UMM... MAY I COME IN?

?!

I'M IN MY BOXERS, SO...

JU-JUST HOLD ON A SEC!

WHA?!

HOLD UP!!

COVER

WHAT ARE YOU --?!

WAIT A SEC!!

PAD

PAD

STOP!

?!!

LEAN

?!

I'VE COME TO FULFILL MY DUTIES.

I WASN'T GONNA DO THA...

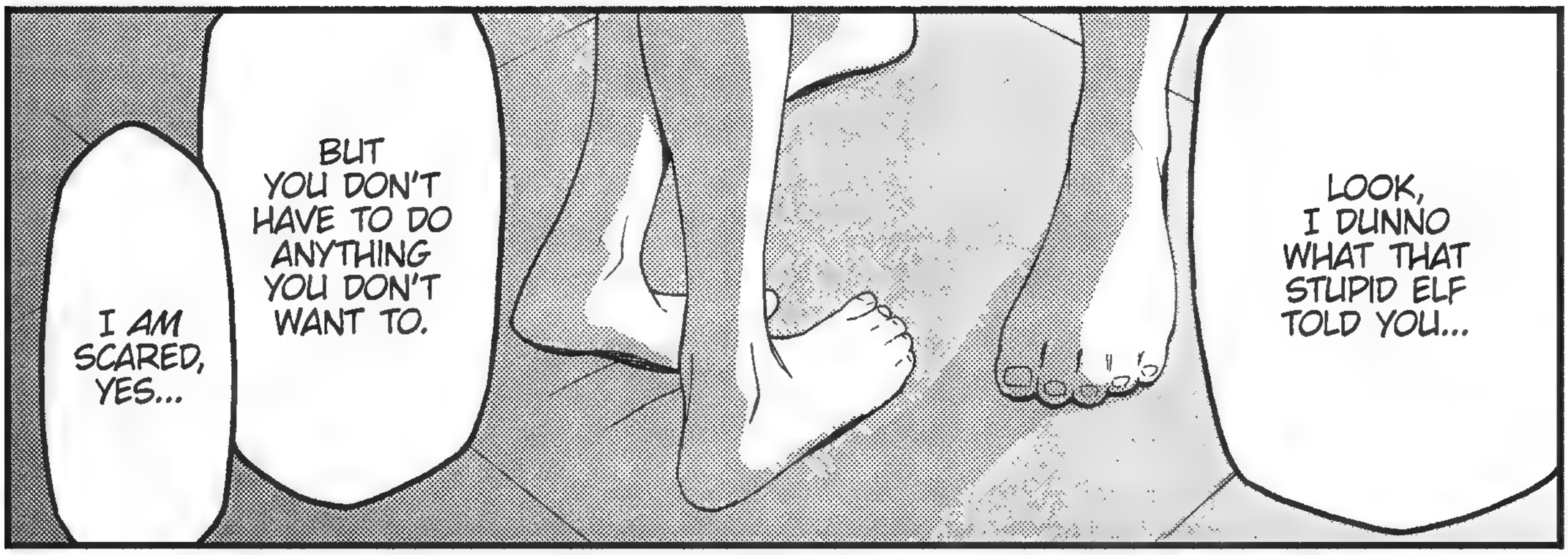
WH-- NO! I TOLD YOU, I...

TREMBLE

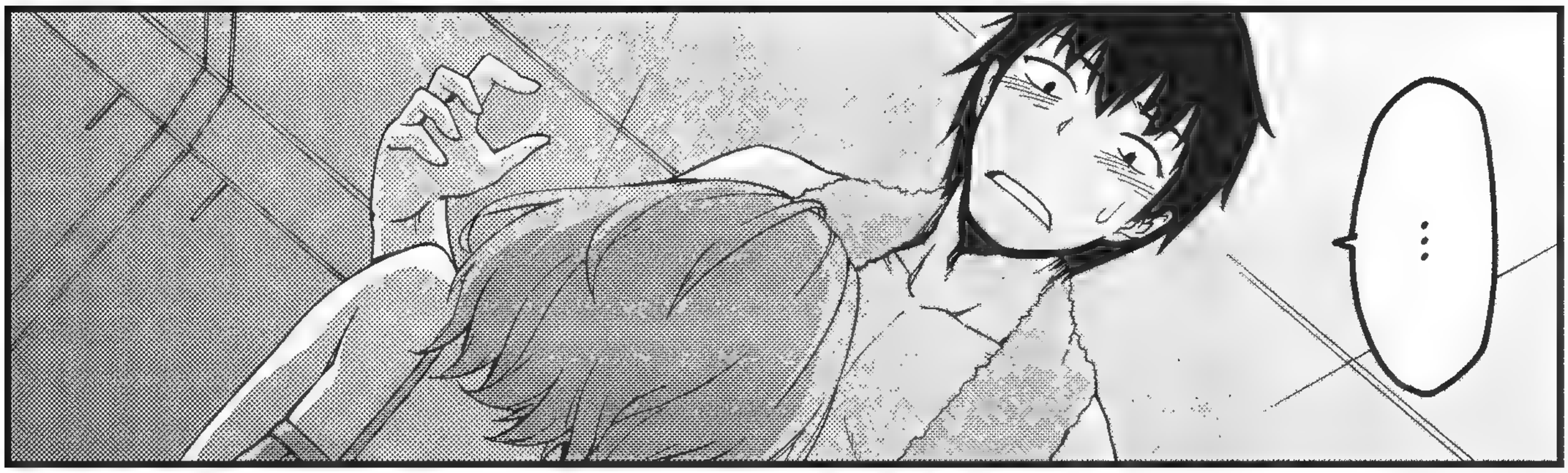
TREMBLE

YOU'RE SCARED, AREN'T YOU?

.....



I'M SCARED OF BEING ABANDONED.



I KNOW YOU WOULDN'T DO THAT.

I KNOW.

I WOULD NEVER--!

IF THERE WAS EVEN ONE THING I COULD DO FOR YOU...

THEN I WOULDN'T BE SO WORRIED...

BUT I'M STILL WORRIED BECAUSE I'M OF NO USE TO YOU...

...

NOW'S THE TIME...

PAT

FOR ME TO STEP UP TO THE PLATE...

.....?

jolt

Fuuu...

Fuuu...

Chapter 5

...

ROLL

SO...
WHAT
TO DO
NEXT...

BUT NOW THAT I'VE GONE AND DONE THIS, I CAN'T KEEP DOING STUFF WITH ONLY MYSELF IN MIND.

LETTING THINGS TAKE THEIR COURSE IS ALL FINE AND DANDY...

I'VE GOT ALL MY DUCKS IN A ROW, SO I'M BLESSED, ESPECIALLY GIVEN THE CIRCUMSTANCES.

I'VE GOT THE KRISHNA, A SUPER-POWERFUL SHIP, MY MERCENARY GIG, AND A CHUNK OF SAVINGS.

BUT HAVING SOMEONE ELSE ABOARD PROBABLY WON'T LEAVE ME IN DIRE STRAITS.

I DIPPED INTO MY CASH PRETTY HEAVILY YESTER-DAY...

THAT SAID...

HEH.

WHEN I THINK ABOUT IT LIKE THAT...

LEAN

LIVING JUST FOR LACK OF ANYTHING BETTER TO DO WOULD BE BORING.

More than boring, it'd be painful.

WELL, IT'S SURPRISINGLY APPEALING.

SETTING THAT GOAL OF BUYING A DETACHED HOME WITH A YARD...

OH.

BUT NOW THAT I'VE GOT MIMI HERE, HAVING A PLACE WORTH COMING HOME TO SOUNDS PRETTY NICE.

AT FIRST, IT WAS JUST PART OF MY PLAN TO SCORE SOME SODA.

HN... NNN...

ABOUT MY OLD UNIVERSE...

Hrrmm...

I ALMOST FORGOT...

MASTER ...

CAPTAIN...

shfff...

WHATEVER.

.....

AND THE RESULTS...

BEEEEEP

VITALS CHECK, COMPLETE.

Phew.

THAT'S A RELIEF...

No hidden injuries or diseases, either!

!!!

SWEET!! NO ISSUES FOUND!!

THINK YOU'D BE ABLE TO COME ALONG?

Not too tired?

OF COURSE!!

I feel fine!!

AFTER BREAKFAST, I WAS GONNA GO GRAB SOME MORE GROCERIES...

AND HIT UP THE GUILD WHILE I'M AT IT.

GREAT. I WAS HOPING YOU WOULD, ACTUALLY.

SINCE THOSE ERRANDS ARE MOSTLY FOR YOUR SAKE.

OH...

I'M SUCH A BURDEN...

I'M SORRY...

?

PIIIIINCH

FUH?

LISTEN UP, MIMI.

?

CAP'N!

DAT HURTSH!

OW! OWCHIE!

AND IF IT COMES DOWN TO THAT, SHORTAGES WON'T BE A LAUGHING MATTER.

SO...

WE'RE SPACE-FARERS.

IF WE MESS SOMETHIN' UP, IT MIGHT BE SIX MONTHS OR MORE TILL WE CAN RESUPPLY.

YOU GOT THAT?

YESH...

I DON'T WANNA SEE ANY POINTLESS HESITATION FROM YOU, OKAY?

NOW LET'S GET SOME BREAKFAST!

GREAT!!

FWIP

HEEP!

.....

NEW

SALL

……？

Oooh...

PEEK

NICE!

AIGHT, YA GIRL'S REGISTERED.

I LOADED UP YER TERMINAL WITH SOME EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES.

AND SINCE YA SAID YA WANT HER TO BE AN OPERATOR...

THAT ASIDE...

TH--

THANK YOU VERY MUCH!

THAT AI TRAINER IS GOOD QUALITY, AND IT'S DECENTLY POPULAR.

IT'LL TEACH YA ABOUT BEIN' AN OPERATOR FROM THE GROUND UP.

THE HELL'D YA GET UP TO?

AFTER YA LEFT YESTER-DAY...

?

THEN START FROM THE BEGINNIN'.

SNF SNF

IT'S A PRETTY LONG STORY, BUT BASICALLY...

I BEEN AT THIS FOR FIFTEEN YEARS...

CLATTER

YER A ROOKIE MERC WITH A DAY'S EXPERIENCE AND YA ALREADY MET A NICE GIRL...

WHY?!

IT AIN'T FAIR!!

AND NOT ONCE HAVE I EXPERIENCED THE BITTER-SWEET TASTE OF LOVE!!

SLAM

CLATTER

...

Shut up!! Damn it!!

THUMP

Let's take him in the back for now.

HEY! WHAT THE HECK ARE YOU DOING?!

YOU'RE DISTURBING THE OTHER CLIENTS!!

Hiya. Been a minute.

So? How's things?

WE'RE ALL STOCKED UP, AND *KRISHNA* PASSED HER SYSTEMS CHECKS.

AT LEAST AS GOOD AS THEY COULD BE...

GOIN' GOOD...

SO WE'RE JUST RELAXIN'.

SO, WHATCHA WANT?

sssip...

I DOUBT YA CALLED JUST TO CHAT.

MIMI'S RECOVERED FROM HER LIFE ON THE STREETS.

Umm...

AND SHE'S IN HER QUARTERS. SHE'S BEEN STUDYING TO BE AN OPERATOR ALL DAY AGAIN.

Uh-huh.

I mentioned before that it seemed like a battle was just waitin' to happen...

Glad that you get straight to the point.

Well, now it's happening. And it's gonna be big.

.....

A BATTLE EVENT WHERE A BUNCH OF PLAYERS WORK TOGETHER TO DEFEAT SOMEONE OR SOMETHING.

A LARGE-SCALE BATTLE...

SEEMS LIKE THIS UNIVERSE FOLLOWS THE SAME RULES AS THE GAME.

YOUR REWARD IS BASED ON HOW MUCH YOU DO, AND FLUCTUATES BASED ON THE RATIO OF YOUR CON-TRIBUTIONS.

The plan is to assault a space pirate base and destroy their ships.

You should be gettin' an invitation any time now.

ON SUCH AN APPETIZING EVENT?

A few days later.

T-Minus One Hour.

.....

BLIP

Apologies for the delay.

ZZZZZX...

You all have my gratitude for mustering here on such short notice.

.....

I am Lieutenant Serena Holz, and I will be your commander for this mission.

We have confirmed that the space pirate base is located here...

in the Gamma Sector of the asteroid belt.

TARGET

I will now explain the battle plan.

It is relatively simple.

My imperial gunship fleet will begin the assault with a bombardment.

Focus should be on eliminating pirates. Destruction of the base should be simple enough.

How-ever...

So...

that is where you come in.

Unfortu-nately...

the gunships are powerful, but imprecise.

If smaller ships escape, my fleet will be unable to pursue them all.

EVEN IF YOU FLATTEN THEIR BASE, THEIR SHIPS CAN JUST REGROUP AND GO ABOUT THEIR BUSINESS AS USUAL.

THE ADVANTAGE PIRATES ENJOY IN BATTLE BOILS DOWN TO THEIR SMALL- AND MID-SIZE HIGH-SPEED SHIPS.

THAT'S HOW WE'RE DOIN' IT, HUH?

Our operational plan is as follows:

YOU BRING IN HIGH-SPEED SHIPS FAVORED BY MERCENARIES TO SWAT THEM OUT OF THE SKY.

SO TO TAKE OUT ALL THOSE PESKY FLIES...

Phase:1

Pirate Base

Mercenary Units

First, the mercenaries will hide, surrounding the target.

Phase:2

Gunship Fleet

Next, the gunships will launch a frontal assault.

Phase:3

The mercenaries will intercept and destory any pirate ships attempting to retreat.

Phase:4

And finally, the gunships will advance and commence mop-op operations.

Our victory condition: all targets fully incapacitated.

Any questions?

……

IF NOT, THAT CONCLUDES THE BRIEFING.

I HAVE A QUESTION.

...

PROCEED.

...

ARE WE PERMITTED TO...

RETREAT AT OUR OWN DISCRETION?

MUMBLE...

...

You've been hired to fight, but you have only one life to live.

If you determine that your risk outweighs the potential rewards, do as you see fit.

OF COURSE.

if you were to run away with your tail between your legs without putting up a fight.

Of course, it would be problematic for me...

HEY--

IF WE FIND OURSELVES IN A BAD POSITION AND TRY TO RETREAT...

OH, I'M JUST CHECKIN'.

US MERCE-NARIES'LL BE IN THERE TOO.

AFTER ALL, THE PIRATES WON'T BE THE ONLY ONES SURROUNDED BY THE END OF THIS BATTLE.

TO DESTROY US, IF WE DON'T CHOOSE TO FIGHT TO THE DEATH.

THEN THIS BATTLE FORMATION ENABLES YOU...

:

I suppose you aren't wrong.

I see...

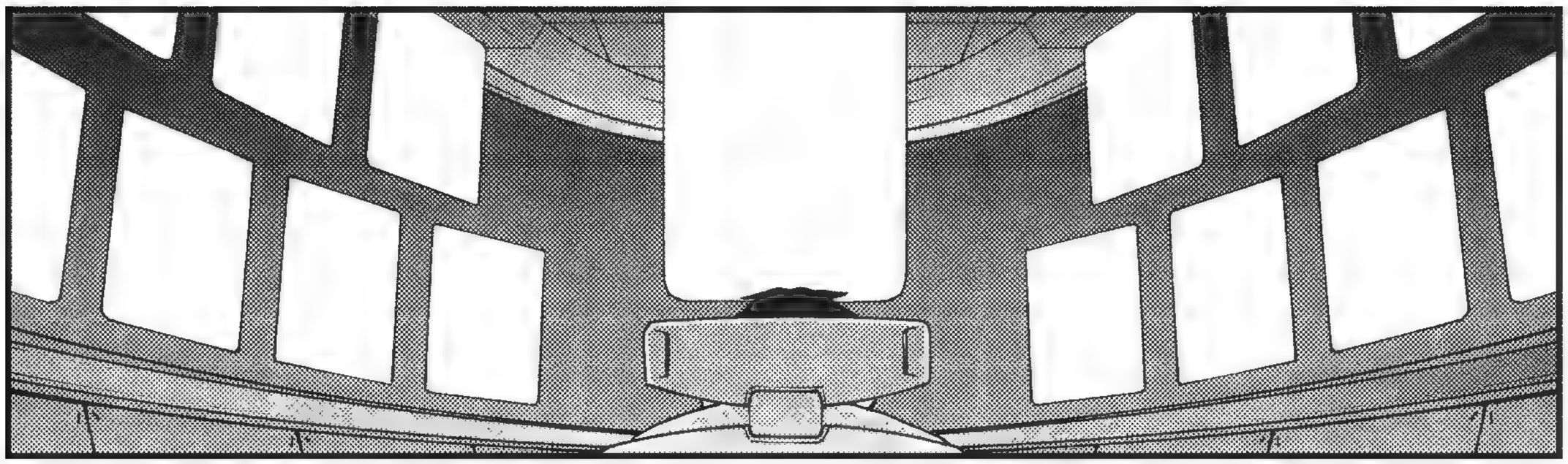
:

we would never employ such brutal tactics.

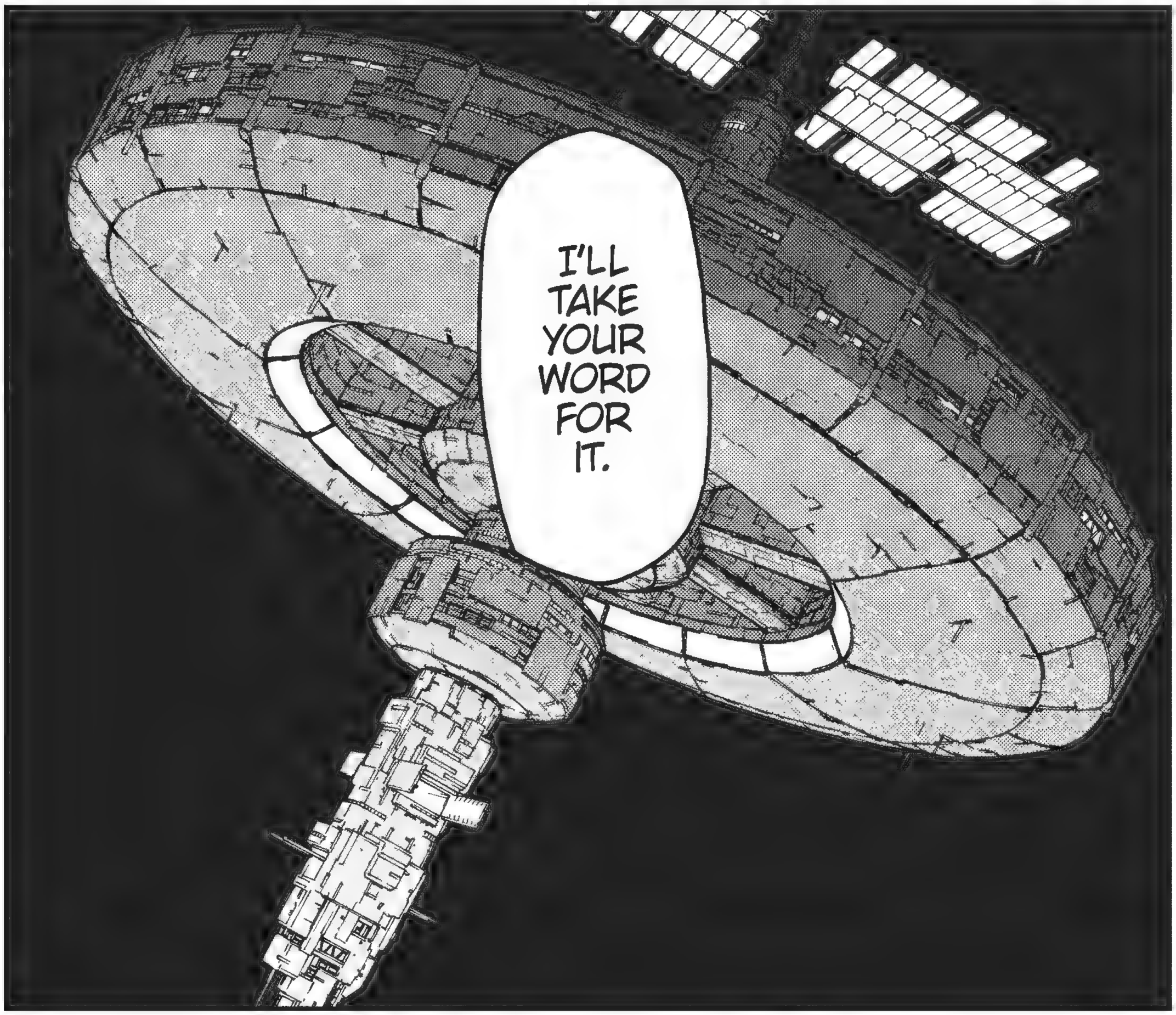
However...

This, I swear to you...

on my pride as an imperial officer.



SMIRK...
Hmph.


I'LL TAKE YOUR WORD FOR IT.

...

SHUDDER

SHUDDER

SHUDDER

SHUDDER

I-I... I-I'LL BE... F-F-F-FUH-INE!

IF YOU'RE SCARED, YOU CAN STAY AT THE COLONY.

O-okay, I get it.

I WILL TRY MY ABSOLUTE HARDEST TO BE EVEN SLIGHTLY USHEFUL!

I MEAN...

WE'RE ABOUT TO GO PUT OUR LIVES ON THE LINE, SO THAT'S TO BE EXPECTED.

HONESTLY, I'M THE WEIRD ONE HERE, CONSIDERING HOW CALM I FEEL.

THAT'S AN ENTIRELY NORMAL REACTION.

Ahh...

Umm...

CAPTAIN?

I JUST CAN'T DROP THE SENSE THAT I'M PLAYING A VIDEO GAME...

WELL...

GOT IT.

COMMAND HAS GIVEN THE ORDER TO DEPART.

ENJOY THIS EVENT AS BEST I CAN!

TIME FOR KRISH-NA...

GUESS I'LL JUST HAFTA...

TO TAKE OFF!!

To Be Continued...

SEVEN SEAS ENTERTAINMENT PRESENTS

REBORN AS A SPACE MERCENARY

I WOKE UP PILOTING THE STRONGEST STARSHIP! Vol.1

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MEZAMETARA SAIKYO SOBI TO UCHUSEN MOCHI DATTA NODE, IKKODATE MEZASHITE YOHEI TOSHITE JIYU NI IKITAI Vol.1

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First published in Japan in 2020 by KADOKAWA CORPORATION, Tokyo.
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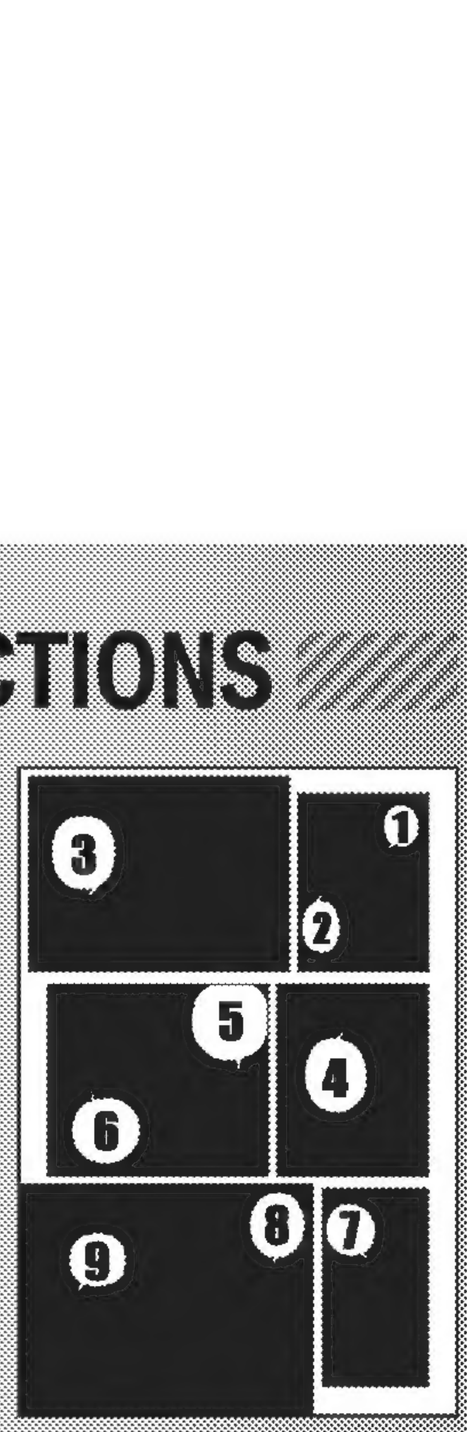
ISBN: 978-1-64827-434-3
Printed in Canada
First Printing: August 2021
10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Ripped by danke-Empire

READING DIRECTIONS

This book reads from ***right to left***, Japanese style. If this is your first time reading manga, you start reading from the top right panel on each page and take it from there. If you get lost, just follow the numbered diagram here. It may seem backwards at first, but you'll get the hang of it! Have fun!!



ZG:23:HY:02:RE

When I woke up, I found myself in outer space—and in a universe like the one in my favorite game.

"With my beloved, ultra specced-out ship, I can make a ton of money as a mercenary and live out my days on some cozy planet!"

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